

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1479
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2002
SICKLE CELL
RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether ICMR has been doing research on 'Sickle Cell' disease for the last ten years;
- (b) whether the ICMR has suggested measures or optional arrangements to prevent this disease;
- (c) if so, the details of measures suggested in this regard;
- (d) whether the Government propose to launch National Sickle Cell Eradication Programme to eradicate Sickle Cell;
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (f) whether the Government are aware of the number of people of backward classes affected by this disease and the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a): Yes, Sir. The ICMR has been doing research on Sickle Cell disease for more than a decade through research institutes, namely; Institute of Immunohaematology, Mumbai, National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad and Regional Medical Research Centres located at Bhubaneswar, Jabalpur and Dibrugarh.

(b)&(c): ICMR has found that Sickle Cell disease has been mostly prevalent amongst tribal population groups and some scheduled castes. For improvement in patients taking Folic Acid, multi-vitamin and deworming tablets were recommended by ICMR. Patient taking these medicines showed hemoglobin level improvement. Also genetic counseling was offered to young couples and health education programmes have been conducted in villages and schools.

(d)to(f): In view of the prevalence of sickle cell anemia in the tribal populations of the country a project titled 'intervention Programme of nutritional anemia and other hemoglobinopathies amongst some primitive tribal populations of India', has been initiated in four States, namely, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Orissa and Tamil Nadu. A pilot study is currently under progress. The outcome of the study will enable to assess the nutritional and hematological problems in order to administer appropriate intervention which will eventually help to formulate a strategy for improving the Health of the primitive tribals which will then help enable the State Governments to take up intervention programmes and integrate them through PHCs.